

arts/entertainment

Exciting Kennedy administration recalled in book

By Pat Higgins

Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the 60s by Harris Wofford, Farrar Press, N. Y., 1980.

Election Day 1980 the leading candidates appear to be Apathy and Cynicism and anyone halfway progressive-liberal is feeling totally defeated.

However, it wasn't always this way, as Harris Wofford describes in his excellent new book of *Of Kennedys and Kings: Mak-*

ing Sense of the Sixties. This is a Wofford's personal recollection of the Kennedy-Johnson administrations and the civil rights movement of the same era.

review

Wofford was a close friend of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, which enables him to give a very personal view of those turbulent, exciting times.

Wofford was a lawyer with a conscience who became involved in the embryonic civil rights struggle of the late 1950's. The movement's key leader was King, a Messianic preacher who advocated a Ghandi type of non-violent protest.

Wofford was quite impressed with this stance as King and others were facing a lot of violence-prone adversaries. King was frequently arrested at protests and Wofford became one of his attorneys.

Branching out from the civil rights movement, Wofford became involved in John Kennedy's campaign for the White House in 1960. Kennedy was able to win the election more on his charismatic personality rather than his sharp differences on the issues.

Kennedy, as a good Democrat, paid lip service to civil rights but, it was not a top priority.

Wofford was appointed the special assistant for Civil Rights and from there prodded Kennedy for reform.

Tough and ruthless

Wofford was skeptical about Robert Kennedy, who had been appointed Attorn-

ey General. He had a reputation for being tough, ruthless and totally committed to the cause of John Kennedy. Wofford was initially much more impressed by JFK and his immense personal charm, but he quickly changed his opinion of Robert Kennedy. Events in the South were forcing the Kennedy administration's hand as black people (and white) began a series of demonstrations asking for their constitutional rights.

The local reactionary authorities condoned violence conducted against the demonstrators. The federal government was forced to intervene, and by doing so, John and Robert Kennedy became heroes to the civil rights movement. The Kennedy's administration then began pressing for sweeping legislation that was eventually passed under Lyndon Johnson.

King welcomed the Kennedy's as allies, but he believed they were being politically expedient rather than true believers. An interesting sidelight reported by Wofford is the personal vendetta against King directed by J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI. Among the tactics employed by Hoover were illegal bugging, intimidation and blackmail, in an attempt to discredit King in particular and the civil rights movement in general.

Exercise authority

Robert Kennedy was the only attorney general, from 1924 until Hoover's death in 1971, to attempt to exercise his legal authority over Hoover and the FBI. Kennedy wanted Hoover to investigate organized crime rather than the laughable U.S. Communist Party.

Hoover refused to cooperate with Ken-

edy's orders and pursued his own policy of disrupting the civil rights movement. Andrew Young and Wofford believe that the FBI had some sort of complicity in King's assassination.

Wofford gives the Kennedy administration credit for some progress in domestic affairs and he believes that if John Kennedy would have been re-elected to a second term, there would have been a lot more done. In foreign affairs, however, the Kennedy's were cold warriors who viewed the Viet Cong and Fidel Castro as personal challenges.

Wofford claims that JFK was sending the bare minimum of military aid to South Vietnam until a diplomatic solution could be reached.

Cuba, however, was the darkest moment of the Kennedy administration. After the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the CIA proceeded with its Operation Mongoose, which was designed to kill Castro in cooperation with the Mafia.

Guilt feelings

The assassination of John Kennedy traumatized Robert Kennedy and plunged him into guilt feelings that Wofford believed stemmed from a sense of responsibility for his brother's death. Wofford said Robert Kennedy didn't believe the Warren Report and privately believed that either it was a CIA-Mafia-anti-Castro Cubans plan or else Castro's retaliation for the attempts on his life.

Wofford said that these guilt feelings profoundly changed Robert Kennedy for the better. He grew as a human being and became a more compassionate person. He became senator from New York and was the voice of the poor, black and youth. He was a committed apostle for social change and against the Vietnam war.

For Wofford, 1968 was the climatic year. Johnson withdrew, King and Robert Kennedy were assassinated and Richard Nixon was elected president. Wofford said the Chicago Convention was the death knell for progressive reform in the political system.

Wofford firmly believes that if Robert Kennedy would have lived, he would have become president and this country would be a lot better off today.

**Columnist laments passage of airfare bargains**

By Robert Bauer

On Dec. 14, smack in the face of finals week, we all should take a moment to mourn the passing of the biggest airfare bargain in Nebraska history. On Dec. 14, Braniff and Texas International will discontinue their promotional fare from Omaha to Dallas.

At \$58 roundtrip, the fare is roughly one-third of the regular coach ticket. That would be like paying \$8.50 a credit hour for tuition or 37 cents a gallon for gasoline.

It is, and as of Dec. 14, will be too good to be true. Fortunately, you can still take advantage of the fare until then. At \$58, it might be cheaper to spend the week-

departures

end in Dallas with a friend (as a weary traveler, they might even provide you with meals and entertainment) than to hang around Lincoln.

The West German government is slowly making it impossible for students to fly from Nebraska to Frankfurt for anything less than a king's ransom. They are doing this by forcing airlines, like Braniff, to cancel their budget fares to Germany.

Name the week

The budget fare is where you name the week you want to travel and the airline names the specific day of the week.

Budget fares (if you can find them) are incredibly cheap. The budget fare out of Omaha (until it was discontinued) was a mere \$584. The next cheapest ticket on that same airline was over \$800. It is enough to make you take Helmut Schmidt's name in vain.

Some Nebraskans, for the time being, still have a way out of this mess. If you are fortunate enough to live in the panhandle, you can still get to Europe for \$602. You do this by purchasing a budget ticket on Delta out of Denver. It's the first time living in the panhandle has made it cheaper to fly anywhere. If Delta is sold out (which would

be unlikely) you can buy the same ticket on Braniff for \$618.

This is a rock-bottom price for getting overseas. Beware, however, that the German government is cancelling budget fares right and left and Denver may soon be wiped off the map. Kansas City went this week and only Helmut knows who will go next.

Lapse into mental disorder

I firmly believe that if a study on suicide were done, airline reservationists would probably have the highest rate of all occupations. The way airfares are changing these days it is a wonder they can work eight hours without lapsing into some sort of mental disorder.

I asked one reservationist a fairly simple question and, in the course of our conversation, the answer changed four times. We would just get done going over one answer

and somebody would put a new memo on her desk. Finally, I unplugged the phone in mid-sentence. I hope she thinks we just got disconnected.

The memos that these people get can really change your airfare too. We talked with a lady at Braniff and she quoted us a ticket price of \$534 for a certain flight. The next day another lady told us we couldn't buy the ticket (it was cancelled) and later that day another lady told us we could buy the ticket for \$534, but only for the next two weeks.

We told her to put it down in writing and she did. The next week when we checked up on the reservations another lady told us the tickets weren't being offered anymore, but that because we had a written guarantee, we could still purchase them.

The moral for all this? Don't take no for an answer and when they do tell you yes, get it in blood.

'Hamlet,' Shakespeare talk broadcast

A discussion about Shakespeare followed by the presentation of one of the Bard's most famous plays, is one of the highlights next week on the Nebraska Educational Network.

A leading historian of the Elizabethan age and author of *William Shakespeare: A Biography*, A.L. Rouse, is featured in a locally-produced special, "Shakespeare, the Man" airing Monday at 7 p.m. on the Nebraska E-TV Network.

Rouse, a fellow of All Souls College at Oxford University in England, is interviewed by Robert Knoll, UNI professor of English. During the 30-minute program, Rouse talks about Shakespeare and his plays, as well as the Elizabethan era. Rouse also presents his theories on the identification of the "dark lady" of Shakespeare's sonnets.

"Shakespeare, the Man" is a production of the cultural

affairs unit of University of Nebraska Television, with Gene Bunge as producer/director of the special.

Hamlet, Shakespeare's classic tragedy of treachery and revenge, opens the new season of "The Shakespeare Plays" later that same Monday evening at 8 p.m. on the Nebraska E-TV Network.

Internationally-acclaimed actor Derek Jacobi stars as the melancholy young prince of Denmark, a role considered to be one of the greatest in English literature. Public television viewers will remember Jacobi as the humbling Emperor in the title role of "I. Claudius" and as the tragically-dethroned King Richard on last season's presentation of *Richard II* on "The Shakespeare Plays."

The cast of the 3½ hour presentation also includes Claire Bloom as Gertrude, Eric Porter as Polonius and Lalla Ward as Ophelia.

Hamlet will be repeated Sunday, November 16, at 10 p.m.